

Seek Peace and Pursue It - Reflections for Lent 2018
Week 6 – 25th March
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Palm Sunday

We are nearing the fulfilment of the prophet Zechariah's words, when a Man will come and bring peace to the land, a humble King upon a donkey. We celebrate this reminder in John's gospel, that Jesus was a humble, peace bearing witness to God's love. Jesus felt love and grief for Lazarus and the sisters, and the story points to God's power and glory in even overcoming death for Lazarus, a precursor of Jesus's resurrection.

Those palm branches waved in greeting with the words 'Hosannah', would appear colourful and a welcome rustle of air in the heat. Having spent some years in Sri Lanka with my husband, David, I can vouch for the many uses of the palm tree and indeed the many types of palm...Palmyrah tall and graceful, the Talipot palm leaves used like an umbrella and in building fences and tents. Coconut oil of course and toddy, a strong intoxicant, from the Kitul tree. We lived in Jaffna, Sri Lanka when the war was still ongoing but a peace process holding tenuously. The people of Jaffna were living amongst shell damaged buildings as indeed our manse at Lockwood House was. The Methodist Church was re-building their St Peter's church, which had been flattened by a Food drop from the Indian Army. Oh how the Christians wanted their church re-built.....and indeed it was! In the midst of bombed out buildings and a desolate park, the church took shape. What a thrill to attend worship there when open!! A raising up of the same church in a new form, to serve the community. The people renewed for service.



1. St Peter's Methodist Church, Jaffna, nearly the first building in the area to be re-constructed during the war.
2. Women at the stand pipes (not wells!) in the streets, also shows the shelled buildings where many lived.

To ponder: Are there any situations within your family, community or church life in which you could be a peace bearing witness to God's love?

Prayer: *May our God of Peace remind us of the cost of service and of repeated renewal. Re-fuel and re-new us for mission, prepare us for service for loving and for peace. In Jesus Christ's name we pray. Amen*

Bible Link: John 12 vs 12 – 19

Hymn: Singing the Faith 262 All glory, laud and honour